THE MACHINE CHARTS

AMIGA RATINGS

Space Rogue	Origin	94
Hammerfist	Activision	90.5
Warhead	Activision	89.1
E-Motion	US Gold	86.45
Player Manager	Anco	86.33

E-Motion and Warhead hang on in there from last month, but have to make room for the very highly rated Space Rogue and Warhead's stablemate Hammerfist.

COMMODORE 64 RATINGS

Vendetta	System 3	93.05
Ikari Warriors	Encore	82.5
Ferrari Formula One	Electronic Arts	73.5
Beyond the Ice Palace	Encore	72
Weird Dreams	Rainbird	61

Vendetta takes over the top slot as this month's top-rated C64 game - this and the oldie Ikari Warriors are way ahead of any other current title. When Commodore games are good, they're very very good, but there's not much strength or depth at the moment.

AMSTRAD CPC RATINGS

Myth	System 3	88.17
Ikari Warriors	Encore	85.17
X-Out	Rainbow Arts	83.5
Dr Doom's Revenge	Empire	80
Wild Streets	Titus	74.75

System 3 tops another format with the graphic adventure Myth, and Ikari Warriors proves there's life in the older titles yet.

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLE RATINGS

Sherman M4 Loriciel 74.88	E-Motion	US Gold	91.25
	Colonel's Bequest	Sierra On-Line	83
	Ski or Die	Electronic Arts	82.5
	Conqueror	Rainbow Arts	80
	Sherman M4	Loriciel	74.88

Perhaps the novelty value of E-Motion has worn off a bit, but later reviews aren't quite as favourable as the first few write-ups - but complimentary enough to keep the title at the top of PC

SPECTRUM RATINGS

Rainbow Islands	Ocean	94.5
Hammerfist	Activision	92.75
E-Motion	US Gold	87.38
Zombi	UbiSoft	87.34
Fruit Machine Simulator	Code Masters	79.5

Who says the Spectrum is becoming neglected? Versions of games also finished on 16-bit formats fill the first three places in this month's counter, all scoring over 85%

ATARI ST RATINGS

Klax	Domark	89
Escape from the Planet		
of the Robot Monsters	Domark	88.83
Castle Master	Domark	87.83
E-Motion	US Gold	87.25
Conqueror	Rainbow Arts	85.5

No publisher has ever taken over a format to this extent before, but Domark's three current biggies are knocking the reviewers for six.

TOP CONSOLE GAME SALES IN MARCH 1990

These are the console games that are selling the most copies at Shekhana's London outlets...

New entries this month include Paranoia on the PC Engine roaring in at number two and Automic Robokidd has dropped out of the charts altogether. On the Sega Megadrive Assault Suit Leynos has squeaked into the chart, displacing Sokoban (and no wonder, really, since although addictive it only involved shoving boxes about hardly advanced console entertainment).

SEGA MEGADRIVE TOP 10

- GOLDEN AXE GHOULS'N'GHOSTS
- SUPER SHINOBI
- FINAL BLOW
- LAST BATTLE (North Star)
- RAMBO III
- FORGOTTEN WORLDS
- SUPER REAL BASKETBALL ASSAULT SUIT LEYNOS
- TATSUJIN

PC ENGINE TOP 10

CHASE HO

- PARANOIA
- SUPER VOLLEYBALL
- SHINOBI
- KNIGHT RIDER NEW ZEALAND STORY
- TIGER ROAD
- VIGILANTE
- ALTERED BEAST
- **HEAVY UNIT**

GAME BOY TOP 10

- **TETRIS**
- SUPER MARIO LAND
- GOLF

- LAST BATTLE (North Star) MASTER KARATEKA
- WORLD BOWLING
- PINBALL
- ASMIC WORLD
- OTHELLO

LYNX TOP 5

- CALIFORNIA GAMES
- **BLUE LIGHTNING**
- CHIPS CHALLENGE
- GATES OF ZENDOCON
- ELECTROCOP

THE ACE STOCKMARKET - THE TOP 25 SOFTCOS

There are four columns of ratings for companies each month in the ACE Stock Market. The first shows the overall score for this month only, statistically calculated from hundreds of reviews in magazines during the current month. The second shows the amount of change - up or down -

The software index rating is the overall average mark given by mag-

azine reviewers over all titles. This month we are only printing the top

from the previous month. The third is the share price: the company's rating relative to its past performance, while the final column shows how highly each company's titles have scored compared to the software index rating for that month. THIS MONTH'S SOFTWARE INDEX RATING:

73.42 **UP NEARLY ONE POINT!**

25 companies in the Stock Market; however, other companies' performances continue to be monitored. Companies rating 100 and marked * are 'new entries'. They haven't

featured in the Company Counter before, and a company's launch share price is always 100.

> Strategy games are the current reviewers' favourites, which is good news for strategy specialists such as Origin, Rainbird, PSS and SSI, which are filling four of the top

> > 8.75

8.4

six positions in this month's company counter. If your finances are a bit more limited, look at the new budget titles out from Hit Squad (8-bit) and 16 Blitz (16-bit) - consistently being rated in the eighties.

Publisher Rating +/-**Shares** Index Activision 85.14 +10.82 114.56 11.72 82.17 Anco +15.47 123.19 Domark 84.85 +3 68 104 53 11.43 Psyclapse 81.82 +12 92 118.75 Origin 93.33 +26.42 139.49 19.91 Krisalis 84.44 -7.06 92.28 11 02 Electronic Arts 81.5 +2.94 103.74 8.08 Hit Squad 90.6 +4.72 105.5 17.18 Gremlin 84 +15.94 123.42 10.58 Sierra On-Line 81.5 -3 96.45 8.08 Rainbird 88.8 +16.05 122.06 15.38 Audiogenic 84 *100 10.58 16 n/a **Psygnosis** 80.4 n/a 112 72 6.98 PSS/Mirrorsoft 87 +4.25 105.14 13.58 Blitz 83.5 0 100 10.08 Loriciel 80.33 +4.45 105.86 6.91 Interceptor 87 n/a *100 13.58 CRL 83 +22.03 136.13 9.58 US Gold 78.56 -3.85 95.33 5.14 SSI/US Gold 85.88 +15.5 122.02 12.46 Arcana 83 113,48 9.58 Ocean 76.76 -7.6 90.99 3.34 UbiSoft 85.22 +9.42 112,43 Rainbow Arts

82.38

+5.83

107.62

8.96

Addictive

76.67

+4.92

106.86



REAL

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Fig 3:

THEMICRO

ADDING TO THE EURO-FLAVOUR OF THE MAGAZINE THIS MONTH, MARIALINA FABIANO SESTERO – AN ITALIAN ACE READER – EXPLAINS HOW TO OUTPLAY A COMPUTER AT CHESS...



Fig 1: View of chessboard after Black's 8th move

"What's the minimum number of moves that you're required to play to score a win against Kasparov?"
Such a question clearly doesn't make sense. But ask the same question of a computer chess program, rather than of Kasparov, and the question in principle does make sense.

This is an illustration of how different playing chess against a computer can be from playing chess against a human con-

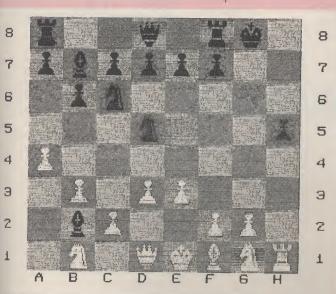


Fig 2: View of chessboard after Black's 11th move



Fig 3: View of chessboard after White's 16th move, resulting in checkmate

tender - at least as long as computer chess programs are not endowed with the typical Artificial Intelligence capability of learning from their own mistakes. Most notably, in fact, present-day computer chess programs are totally predictable. Namely, given a sequence of moves from the opponent, they always reply with the same sequence of countermoves. While human players of course are not.

It also suggests that you can grow annoyed of regularly having to surrender to the computer's

implacable shrewdness of play. Fortunately there is another way for you to have fun with your favourite chess program. Namely, you can refer back to one of the - perhaps rare - cases in which confrontation with the computer has resulted in victory, and try to improve the efficiency of your play in such a game by systematically testing a number of move variations against the repetitious answering moves of the computer. In this context, efficiency can be taken to mean first of all brevity - in terms of the number of moves required to complete the game. Subordinately, in comparing games of equal length, you may take differential losses into account, by relatively weighing the importance of the pieces lost in battle by the two contenders.

BLITZ SARGON III

In that spirit, after some

time - actually quite long spent engaging the well known Sargon III chess program, at the difficulty level 8E on the Commodore 64. I have eventually hit upon a blitz-winning sequence of moves. As for the chosen difficulty level of 8E, it must be appreciated that it is Sargon's highest with predetermined constraints on search depth - that is, the highest level at which Sargon's moves are fully reproducible from game to game. In any case, its quite a formidable opponent for the average amateur chess player!

The strategy which my best winning game is based upon exploits the circumstance that Sargon III is apparently always eager to castle on the king side, if it is given a chance to do so. Hence my initial moves are tailored to lure

Sargon III into performing a kingside castling very early in the game (the castling takes place on the sixth move). The same initial moves of mine, however, are also aimed at concentrating some key pieces on the king side of the chessboard, in preparation for the unleashing of a massive attack on the enemy stronghold. Here is how the initial part of the game develops:

Move No./Player (White)/Sargon (Black) 1 P. h2-h4 P. b7-b6 2 P. a2-a4 B. c8-b7 3 R. a1-a3 N. g8-f6 4 R. a3-h3 P. g7-g6 P. b2-b3 5 B. f8-g7 6 P. d2-d3 0-0 P. e2-e3 N. f6-d5 P. h4-h5 N. b8-c6

Where in the sixth move, kingside castling has been indicated, as usual, by the notation 0-0.

Then the centre part of the game deploys, consisting of three crucial moves.
White wants to lure away some of the pieces that are defending Black's King.
Such a goal is attained through an exchange of Pawns, as well as also – very boldly – through the sacrifice of a white Rock and a white Bishop:

9 P. h5xg6 P. h7xg6 10 R. h3-h5 P. g6xh5 11 B. c1-b2 B.g7xb2

The last moves have thus earned Black a fat booty. But no sooner has Black rejoiced on that, than the white Queen darts in, posing a deadly threat to the Black King. Actually, the incumbent checkmate enters the sounding horizon of Sargon III as early as of the 12th move – at an amazing search depth of eight halfmoves into the future. From there on, the

game no longer has a story, with Sargon itself – under request – suggesting the steps that leads to its defeat:

12 Q. d1xh5 R. f8-e8 13 P. c2-c3 B. b2xc3+ 14 N. b1xc3 P. f7-f5 15 Q. h5-g6+ K. g8-f8 16 R. h1-h8++

Where the moves that have resulted in check and checkmate have been labelled with a + and ++, respectively.

Does this sequence of moves possibly represent the blitz-iest victory that can be scored against the chess program Sargon III, at the difficulty level 8E, on the Commodore 64? Those among you may be willing to challenge such a statement - but are intimidated by the difficulty of 8E-level play - should be encouraged to experiment with new possible strategies at some lower level of play. Only then should they attempt upgrading their more successful attack schemes all the way up to the topmost difficulty level. Such an approach is usually more effective than working out new lines of attack directly at the level

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SO

(CONSOLES)

ant to splash out on a games machine? Check out this month's console guide for full details of the machines currently available. Next month, we'll be listing 16 bit computers.

Supplier telephone numbers are their own unless PR agencies are available. As a general rule, however, your local dealer should be the first place to start asking questions.

We've also provided some Star Ratings for each machine, but as with all ratings they should be taken into account along with your own needs and preferences. The more stars the better.

ATARI LYNX

Package:	Lynx with California
	Games pack
Memory:	64K
Processor:	6502
Price:	£149.95
Contact:	Atari 0753 333344

IN BRIEF

The Lynx was designed by a team including RJ Mical one of the men behind the Amiga. If that doesn't convince you consider it runs a fast 6502, has 8Mb of game storage on its cards and supports multi-player games. The graphics hardware has built in hardware scrolling and image scaling. Software is a little thin at the moment but bound to increase during 1990. Although not officially available yet in the UK, the Lynx is widely available from distributors

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Stereo Output:

Performance:

GRAPHICS AND SUL	טאנ
Resolution:	160 x 102
Palette:	4096
Colours:	16
TV:	No
Monitor Output:	No
Monitor Supplied: Y	es - 3.5 inch backlit
	colour LCD
Monitor Options:	None
Sprites: Specia	I graphics hardware
effectively treats	ALL screen objects
	as sprites!
Speed:	Fast
**	*
Speaker Quality:	Very good
MIDI:	No

4 channel, 5 octave

believed.

stereo sound has to be heard to be

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Cartridge	Format:	8Mb ROM
Cartridge	Price:	N/A
Joystick:		4 way joypad.
Ports:	Cartridge po	ort; multi-player
port; m	iniature stereo h	eadphone jack.

Existing Software Base: Very small. Current Releases: California Games is a great freebie.

Prospects: Very good. Software Loading: Almost instant.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: As RRP Second Hand Availability: Very few Maintenance: One year's guarantee.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics:

Sound: **Expansion:** Overall:

ATARI VCS

	TBA
	N/A
6507 (2600)	/6502 (7800)
ed Retail Pri	ce: VCS2600
ú39.99; VC	S7800 ú79.99
Atari	0753 33344
	ed Retail Prid ú39.99; VCS

Sprites:

Speed:

The VCS2600 is a reboxed version of the original Atari games console which until a couple of years ago remained the best selling home video games system of all time. The VCS7800 is a revamped version of the VCS2600 with a faster processor, slightly better sound and vastly improved graphics.

GRAPHICS AND	SOUND
Resolution:	192 x 160 (2600)
	320 x 242 (7800)
Palette:	16 (2600)/256 (7800)
Colours:	4 (2600)/16 (7800)
TV:	Yes
Monitor Output:	No
Monitor Supplie	d: No
Monitor Options	: No

N/A/64

Slow

Speaker Quality:	Depends on TV
MIDI:	No
Stereo Output:	No
Performance: Limit	ted to 1 channel on

2600 and two on 7800.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Joystick:	Supplied
Ports:	2 x 9 pin D for joysticks;
	TV; cartridge port.

Existing Software Base: Small **Current Releases:** Rare Games: A few Prospects: Unsure in the light of new

competition from Japan. Software Loading: Instant

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price:	As RRP.
Second Hand Availability:	Worth
	looking

Maintenance: One year's guarantee.

STAR RATINGS

* * * * *

	2600	7800
Graphics:	*	**
Sound:	*	**
Expansion:	None	None
Overall:	*	**

KONIX

Multi-system plus joystick

	and Bikers
Memory:	256K + 512K expansion.
Processor:	8086 + 12Mhz custom
	RISC chip
Price:	£229
Contact	Michael Raytor 0273 635503

Package:

Since its exclusive unveiling in ACE, the Konix has suffered from the changing fortunes of its manufacturer. A pity because it had the makings of a champion. For the first time, a games console has the option of changing between a joystick yoke, steering wheel and a handle bar - depending on the game being played. The multisystem was going to be THE machine when it appears...but whether it will ever make it now seems doubtful. If you see one, buy it for the rarity value, not for the prospects.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Resolution:	256 x 200 to
512 x 2	200 (software programmable
Palette:	4096
Colours:	512 available at
	low resolutions; 16 in hi-res.
77.6	

Yes **Monitor Output:** Yes **Monitor Supplied:** No **Monitor Options:** Analogue RBG +

sound; composite

Sprites: Multi-system uses four hardware screen planes (like Amiga's dual-playfield). The blitter is capable of 12 million pixels per second. In other words, over 50 frames per second.

Speed: Very fast

Speaker Quality: Depends on

TV/monitor. MIDI: No Stereo Output: 3.5mm jack

to headphones

Performance: Digital Signal Processor could produce up to 40 channels of sampled sound. If you want a game as well this drops to a 8 channels (4 left, 4 right) over 9 octaves - better than the Amiga!

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Disk Format: 3.5in - 880K Disk Price: Applies to developers only. Disk Performance: Fast + reliable Joystick/Mouse: 3 proportional

channels built in. Joystick; Sound 3.5mm jack; Ports: 8 pin DIN RGB; expansion port for

light gun and Power Chair.

we live in hope.

Existing Software Base: Minuscule. **Current Releases:** Last Ninja II; Bikers; Mutant Camels '90; Hammerfist; Star Ray. . .

All likely to be arcade titles. Games: Prospects: Now very poor, but

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: As RRP Second Hand Availability: Not on sale yet - so no S/H market. Maintenance: Expect one year's guarantee with normal return procedures.

STAR RATINGS Graphics: Sound: **** Expansion: **** Overall:

NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE

Standard version - console, plus game controllers plus 1 game (Super Mario Brothers); Deluxe version - console, game controller, light gun, ROB Robot, 2 games. Recommended Retail Price: Standard

IN BRIEF

The world's largest selling console, largely because of the playability of some of its games rather than its hardware specification, which is 8-bit average. Better supported now in the UK than it used to be.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Resolution:	256 x 240
Palette:	52
Colours:	16
TV:	Yes
Monitor Output:	No
Monitor Supplied:	No
Monitor Options:	None
Sprites:	N/A
Speed:	Average

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Speaker Quality:

Stereo Output:

Performance:

Joystick/Mouse: 2 dedicated controllers supplied. IR wireless controllers with 30ft range now available for ú39.95.

Existing Software Base: Around 50 titles available here. Many more available in Japan but these require a converter to

Current Releases: Nintendo predict about 2-3 titles per month.

Prospects: In the UK, improving due to increased support – but

this is yesterday's technology. **Software Loading:** Instant

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: As RRP.
Second Hand Availability: A few.
Maintenance: One year's guarantee.
Faulty machines return to dealer.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics:		*	*	*
Sound:			*	*
Expansion:	*	*	*	*
Overall:		*	*	*

NINTENDO GAMEBOY

Package: Main unit + 1 game (*Tetris*)

Memory: 64Kbit (8K bytes)

Processor: Custom 8 bit

Price: Not yet released in the UK. US
price is around \$89. Expect to pay £79
when officially launched in September.

Contact: Deighton PR 01-836 2973

IN BRIEF

Nintendo were the first company to produce a dedicated handheld console and now it seems everyone wants to get in on the act. On reflection even the Game Boy was a long time coming since the technology employed by the display is starting to look dated.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Resolution: N/A
Colours: 2 (monochrome)
Monitor Supplied: Yes - LCD display is lit by ambient light.
Sprites: Information not available
Speed: Fast for what it is.

Speaker Quality: Depends on head

phones.

Stereo Output:

Yes

Plays a lot better

than it looks.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Performance:

Keyboard:	Select and Start + 2 option
	buttons.
Joystick:	Single 8 way controller.
Ports:	Headphone socket;
	dual-machine interface.

Francisco Cod	busine Dance Consider namidle.

Existing Software Base: Growing rapidly
- check with your local dealer.

Current Releases: Increasing
Games: Arcade and puzzle-type.

Prospects: Not due for UK release until
at least September, Game Boy – on
technological grounds – ought to be hard
pressed to beat the Lynx, but it's cheaper
and the games play very well.

BUYLINES

Software Loading:

N/A

No

Average

Best Buy Price: Only available through grey imports as yet.

Second Hand Availability: None.

Maintenance: Watch out - grey imported machines rarely have any real warranty.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics:	
Sound:	***
Expansion:	Dual machine interface has
	lots of potential
Overall:	****

NEC PC ENGINE

Package:	PC Engine + controller
	and 1 game
Memory:	64K internal + 8K video; 2 -
	128K internal 32K video
Processor:	8 bit custom
Price:	N/A (US price around \$199)
Contact:	Local dealers

N BRIEF

There are now very firm indications that this machine will be released in the UK in September. It's CD-ROM add-on drive is now the largest selling CD unit on the market and is responsible for much of the recent increase in CD development. There's also a sixteen bit version, vastly more powerful, called the Turbographx, but this is only rarely available through importers and at a price – usually around £300. NEC are also working on a handheld version of the Engine which will be software compatible with its larger brother.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Resolution:	256 x 21
Palette:	512 (Tgx 1024
Colours:	32 - 16 backgroun

	and 16 shared	by sprites.
TV:		Yes
Monitor Outp	ut:	N/A
Monitor Supp	lied:	No
Monitor Optio	ns:	N/A
Sprites:	64 (Tgx 128)
Speed:	Very fast cons	idering this
		is an 8 bit!

Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.

MIDI: No
Stereo Output: Yes
Performance: 6 channel stereo

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

FIFT	IDWAILE MID OUT THAIL
Disk Format:	CD ROM at extra cost
Disk Price:	Read-only so N/A
Disk Perform	ance: Superb - the CD
1	ROM adds a new dimension
Joystick:	Supplied with dedicated
	controlle

Existing Software Base: Large
Current Releases: Increasing.
Games: Almost exclusively arcade.
Prospects: Good.
Software Loading: Cartridge is instant; CD OK.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: Currently grey import.
Second Hand Availability: V Rare
Maintenance: Watch out - grey imported
machines rarely have any real warranty.

STAR RATINGS

O IT III TO TI II TOO	
Graphics:	***
Sound:	***
Expansion:	***
Overall:	* * * *

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM

Package: Console using cartridge or smart card plus game controller and 1 game (Hang On).

Recommended Retail Price: £79.95; ú99.95 (+light gun); ú129.95 (+ light gun and 3D glasses).

Contact:Virgin Mastertronic 01-727 8070

N BRIEF

Japanese software base is not as good as Nintendo's but more titles reach UK. Mastertronic have given good support to the machine so the prospects look good. Like the Nintendo, however, this 8-bit machine uses established but dated technology.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Resolution:	256 x 192
Palette:	64
Colours:	16
TV:	Yes
Monitor:	No

Speaker Quality: Depends on TV. **Performance:** 3 channels.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Joystick: Game controller supplied

Existing Software Base: Very good.

Current Releases: Good Games: All arcade Prospects: As good as

any 8-bit console.
Instant.

Software Loading:

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP
Second Hand Availability: Some

Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Faulty machines return to dealer.

STAR RATINGS

Gr	aphics:	*	*	*
So	und:	*	*	y
Ex	pansion:	*	*	7
Ov	erall:	*	*	*

SEGA MEGADRIVE

Package: Megadrive, controller,

one game.

 Memory:
 74K main + 64K video

 Processor:
 68000 + Z80B

Price: Under ú200 when it appears. Contact:Virgin Mastertronic 01-727 8070

IN BRIEF

Excellent example of the new 16-bit console technologies. Although still not officially available, grey importers are laughing all the way to the bank. All will cease when Virgin Mastertronic start importing the official UK in September Likely to be the first decent 16-bit console to receive official support in the UK.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Resolution:	320 x 224
Palette:	512
Colours:	64
TV:	Yes
Monitor:	No
Sprites:	80
Speed:	Very fast
**	*

Speaker Quality: N/A
MIDI: No
Stereo Output: Yes
Performance: 12 channel stereo sound
is produced by a custom FM chip and

sounds fantastic.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Joystick: Dedicated controller supplied.

Existing Software Base: Poor
Current Releases: Few in UK at present
Games: All arcade
Prospects: Very good.
Software Loading: Instant

BUYLINESBest Buy Price: Only available through grey imports as yet, Second Hand Availability: N/A Maintenance: Watch out - grey imported machines rarely have any real warranty.

STAR RATING

	STAN NAI	В	К	2	ls
Graphics:	*	*	*	×	×
Sound:	*	*	*	*	*
Expansion:			*	*	*
Overall:	*	×	×	*	×

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As a bonus, you could also win a Fying Twister toy: basically a wooden stick with a bit of propellor-shaped plastic attached. You thus fire your 'spinner' into the air for unlimited amusement, entertainment and allround pleasure. Wow! No, serously, you'll have literally hours of fun with Flying Twister. Honest. But remember... do not fire the spinner at point blank range towards other people or animals - it's very anti-social and generally not a nice thing to do.

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Agony ACE is a new section in the magazine, dedicated to help solve your Advanced Computer Entertainment problems. No matter how complex or trivial the query, we'll try our best to answer it. This service is completely confidential - no names will be printed - so don't worry, just ask us. Write on a postcard to: AGONY ACE, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. SORRY, AGONY ACE CANNOT ANSWER TELEPHONE ENQUIRES.

What, in your opinion, is the best sprite ever produced in a computer, console or coin-op game?

· Laurence: "Darius (The Edge), Shadow of the Beast (Psygnosis) and X-Out (Rainbow Arts) all have good sprites. System Three's Myth sprites were small but well animated. My all-time favourite was the Tyrannosaurus Rex in 3D Monster Maze on the Zx81."

Jim: "Who am I working with? You're all mad. But as your asking, the Gelatinous Blob from Crystal Quest on my Macintosh is the best. I like the noise it makes when you shoot it."

Rik: "The Last Ninja sprite from System Three because the character was dressed in black. Pacman has to be greatest sprite ever created though: simple and cute."

Steve: "For its time, the animated figure in Epyx's Impossible Mission was great, as was the flea in Bugaboo by Quicksil-

What ever happened to Rob Hubbard? His soundtracks on the C64 games Sanxion and Delta by Thalamus were brilliant, but I haven't heard anything from him in ages.

· Rob Hubbard was one of the most prolific C64 musicians in the mid-80's. His dancetrack on the C64 conversion of Commando from Elite was my personal favourite.

Unfortunatley for UK gamers, the surf and sun of California lured Hubbard away. He went to work for Electronic Arts in the States. Since then, he has concentrated on more advanced electronic music-making. For further information, have a look at the Electronic Arts article in ACE 31.

How can I improve my reflexes in computer games?

· Short of pyscho-therapy (If you've heard of a course like this please let us know), heightened Extra Sensory Perception (ESP) or a cyberpunk surgical operation to directly link up human brain tissue to silicon processors (don't laugh it could happen someday), the only way to improve your reflexes is good old practise. And when you've done that, practise some more.

Where can I get back-issues of ACE?

· If you want back issues of the magazine or wish to subscribe to ACE write to: EMAP Frontline, ACE Back Issues Department, PO Box 500, Leicester, LE99 0AA.

Alternatively call: 0858 410510 (subscription telephone orders), 0858 410888 (subscription ansaphone orders) or 0858 410510 (queries and back copies).

I recently plugged one of my Hoover washing machine cards into my Sega Master system. You can imagine my surprise when my TV said, "Do me a favour, plug me into a softener".

Why did it do this? Does this mean Hoover cards don't work on the Master system? Can I use them on the new 16-bit Sega Megadrive console? Is the Master System also incompatible with NatWest Cashcards, Visa credit cards and my video rental shop membership card?

· It seems you're suffering from the hallucinatory effects of heinous chemicals. We advise you to immediately seek medical assistance.

along with your full name, address and micro. And send it to:

TWIST AND SHOUT COMP. ACE, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Entries must reach us by 7th June, 1990. Employees of Millenium and Emap Images are not eligible for

entry. The editors decision is final and no correspondance will be entered into. Good luck!

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HOT OFF THE SHELVES

THIS MONTH ACE GIVES YOU THE LOWDOWN ON THE LATEST AND GREATEST RELEASES TO HIT THE SHOPS. THESE ARE ALL THE ACE RATED GAMES THAT WE HAVE REVIEWED OVER THE LAST SIX MONTHS. WE WERE VERY IMPRESSED BY ALL OF THEM, AND WE KNOW YOU WILL BE TOO. SO IF YOUR SOFTWARE COLLECTION IS LOOKING A LITTLE DOWN IN THE MOUTH, THESE ARE THE GAMES YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING AT TO MAKE YOUR MICRO MEANINGFUL, YOUR NIBBLES BYTE SIZE, YOUR JOYSTICK JOYFUL, YOUR MOUSE MIGHTY, AND YOUR DISK DRIVE DELERIOUS. ALL OF THE GAMES COVERED HERE SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL RETAILER. SO SCAN OUR LISTING, GET YOUR DOSH OUT, AND START HAVING A GOOD TIME AGAIN. FILE UNDER 'ESSENTIAL'!

BATMAN

US Gold ● Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk The game of the movie. Michael Keaton put up a pretty good show as the caped crusader in the film, and his digital counterpart

pretty good show as the caped crusader in the film, and his digital counterpart isn't too bad either. There are no less than five sections to the game. The first, Axis Chemical Plant. and last, Gotham City Cathedral, are superb 2D platform games in which our hero has to swing around on his batrope bumping off the villains before they get him. There is also a brain game in the Batcave and two excellent 3D games set in the Batmobile and Batwing respectively. A must for all DC comic fans.

★ ACE RATING 922

BOMBERActivision ● Atari ST

£24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● Spectrum £14.99cs £19.99dk ● Amstrad £14.99cs

£19.99dk • C64

£14.99cs £19.99dk ● PC £34.99dk

A flight sim employing fast solid vector graphics with more bells and whistles than most similar programs. There are a total of fourteen fighter bombers from around the world featured in the program. If you get bored of the standard forward cockpit view then it is possible to select one of a variety of out of cockpit views. The PC ver-

sion is an experience not

to be missed (providing

you have a 286 or 386 machine with VGA or better), but for all the other versions – try before you buy!

*** ACE RATING 925**

CHAOS STRIKES BACK

FTL/Mirrorsoft • Atari ST £24.99 ● Amiga TBA The long awaited sequel to Dungeon Master. If you have already played through the first program you can use your existing characters, otherwise there is another hall of mirrors you can select from. Chaos has a similar feel to Dungeon Master, but is much tougher. There are also some new features thrown in like a character editor, and help oracle (very handy). If you haven't played Dungeon Master, then play that first before making a definite date with this game.

*** ACE RATING 945**

CONQUEROR

Rainbow Arts • Atari ST £19.99dk Amiga £24.99dk • PC £24.99dk An arcade style tank sim which makes use of a 3D graphics system based around the one David Braben developed for Zarch. There are three types of game available: arcade, attrition, and strategy. All three are best played with two joysticks Battlezone style, but there are control options to suit every set-up. A definite buy for tank buffs.

★ ACE RATING 925

DAMOCLES

Novagen ● Atari ST

£24.95dk ● Amiga £24.95dk ● PC TBA This unusual combination between flight sim and adventure game, the sequel to the well received Mercenary, has been in development for a couple of years now, but the resulting game has been well worth the wait. The wireframe graphics of the original game have been replaced by solid 3D vector graphics, but they are just as fast. There are now nine planets to explore instead of one city, so there is plenty of long term challenge here.

*** ACE RATING 935**

FUTURE WARS

Palace Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk ● PC TBA A totally mouse-driven graphic adventure from French developers Delphine. You are cast as a mild-mannered office window cleaner who gets caught up in an alien plot to conquer Earth in the 43rd century. The graphics and background music are very striking and the game is made very accessible by the lack of text entry. There is enough of a challenge here to keep most adventurers happy for some time. A delightful

★ ACE RATING 910

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

US Gold ● Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk
The cute sequel to Capcom's hit coin-op Ghosts
'n' Goblins. Brave many difficult horizontally scrolling
levels in one of the toughest arcade games to
emerge for some time.
You must guide the little
knight through many

faint hearted.

★ ACE RATING 905

waves of cute sprites to

rescue the princess. Grip-

ping stuff, but not for the

GRAVITY

Imageworks • Atari ST £24.95dk Amiga £24.95dk ● PC TBA Deep space strategy unlike anything you've ever seen before. The universe is being invaded by the alien outies who are attempting to turn all the suns in the universe into black holes. Meanwhile you must create as many inhabitable systems as possible. The game makes use of the principle of Einstein-Minkowski fourspace - this makes for some very unusual graphics. When you add programmable drones and travel via black holes you have yourself a highly original and compelling game.

★ ACE RATING 930

HARD DRIVIN'

Domark ◆ Atari ST £19.99dk ◆ Amiga £19.99dk ◆ Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk ◆ Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk ◆ C64 £9.99cs £12.99dk ◆ PC £24.99dk Archimedes £30.00dk A very competent conversion of the Tengen coin-op. Drive your Ferrari round either a speed track or a stunt track complete with a loop and open bridge to leap. The coin-op scored on it's super fast solid vector graphics, and these have been faithfully reproduced in the computer versions. A must buy.

★ ACE RATING 937

HARPOON

Mirrorsoft/PSS ● PC £29.99dk

Quite simply the best naval simulation to be released for the General Public.The battleset that comes with the game deals with East-West conflict in the North Sea, but other battlesets wiill be available soon. A clever system of three map types is used to effectively manage each mission. The nice thing about Harpoon is that the computer takes care of all the boring mechanics allowing you to concentrate on broad tactics. A must buy for anyone interested in modern naval war-

★ ACE RATING 940

INDIANAPOLIS 500

Electronic Arts ● PC £24.95

The ultimate racing game. Indy 500 uses state of the art solid vector graphics, which really add something to the high speed action. As in Activision's Bomber there are a variety of out-of-cockpit views to select from. The realistic handling of the cars will have you coming back to this game time and time again.

★ ACE RATING 935

INTERPHASE

Imageworks

Atari ST

£24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk PC £24.99dk A 3D extravaganza supposedly inspired by William Gibson's novel Neuromancer. It is set in a hitech future. Your task is to guide a female saboteur to the heart of the Dreamtrack Corporation by interacting with a strange 3D environment. The game is very weird and very compelling. It is also very hard - don't expect to get through this one in a hurry. *** ACE RATING 915**

KNIGHTS OF LEGEND

Origin/Mindscape ● PC TBA

Role Playing at it's best. An expandable game set in the medieval land of Ashtalarea. There are twenty-four quests to complete, or you can simply enjoy exploring. The program stands out because of its attention to detail. There are no less than forty different algorithms to decide how and when an enemy retreats for instance. Impressive stuff.

★ ACE RATING 945

KNIGHTS OF THE CRYSTAL-LION

US Gold ● Amiga £29.99dk including musicassette of soundtrack The most original game that US Gold has released in a long time. It has been marketed as a 'culture simulator', but that doesn't really say much about the game. You play a member of a futuristic community and your task is to rise to the highest possible status

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within that culture. This involves playing through several distinct subgames. The whole is a highly unusual experience with distinct graphics and a superb soundtrack. This certainly won't be to everybodies taste, but if you are looking for something a little different – try this.

★ ACE RATING 935

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M1 TANK PLA-TOON

Microprose ● PC £39.95 The ultimate tank sim. Not only are there realistic 3D vector graphic sequences with a hell of a lot of atmosphere, but you also have to think carefully about choice of platoons, men, and the way you tackle each scenario. Microprose had to call on the Freedom of Information act to get the info it needed for the game. The result is one of the most frighteningly accurate tank sims we've

* ACE RATING 926

MIDWINTER

Microprose ● Atari ST £29.99dk

The latest mega hit from top programmer Mike Singleton, creator of Lords of Midnight. The game is set on a frozen island in the future. Your task is to recruit members of the Peace Force to fight off General Masters invasion force. This is done by managing people and resources via a series of Fractal maps and menus. The game has disappointing sound, but nice 3D graphics, and enough solid gameplay to keep you going for months.

*** ACE RATING 948**

MYTH

System 3 • C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk • Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk
The game that pushes the C64 and Spectrum further than they have ever been before. Fight your way through several time zones to reach the ultimate confrontation with the god Dameron. The game is captivating not only because of it's size and depth but also

because of the superbly animated sprites and sheer playability.

★ ACE RATING 925

OPERATION THUNDER-BOLT

Ocean • Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £24.99 • Spectrum £9.99cs ● Amstrad £9.99cs • C64 £9.99cs Eminently successful conversion of the hot coin-op hit Operation Wolf. Grab you Uzi and shoot your way through hordes of terrorists to rescue the luckless hostages. There are new 3D scenarios this time to add to the frantic lead spitting of the original. Best played with a light gun, but a mouse will suffice if you don't have one. Joystick or keyboard controls don't really cope however.

★ ACE RATING 927

PIPEMANIA

Entertainment International

■ Atari ST £19.95dk

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The game that proves plumbing can be fun. You must construct a continuous length of pipe from several sections before the flooz escapes. The action is just as compelling as games like *Tetris* and will have you burning the midnight oil in an attempt to beat the odds. It is available for practically every machine, so there is no excuse for not owning a copy.

★ ACE RATING 910

PLAYER MAN-AGER

AGER

Anco ● Atari ST £19.95dk

● Amiga £19.95dk ●
Spectrum £9.95cs
£14.95 ● C64 £9.95cs
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£9.95cs £14.95dk

Kick Off with a management/strategy element.
The game is completely

icon driven, making it easy

to get into. The management detail is superb, right down to planning in-match tactics. And for the match you can either watch from the sidelines or join in with the Kick Off style fun yourself.

* ACE RATING 920

PRO TENNIS TOUR

Ubi Soft/Blue Byte ● Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk ● Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk • C64 £12.99cs £16.99dk Amstrad £9,99cs £16.99dk • PC £29.99dk The best tennis game yet. The control method works really well, although the standard of the computer players is good, so you'll have to put in a lot of practice. There is a choice of grass, concrete, clay, and indoor courts, as well as comprehensive practice options. A good way of spending a few hours while you are waiting for WImbledon.

★ ACE RATING 900

QUARTZ

Firebird ● Amiga £24.99dk ● Atari ST £24.99dk

A game inspired by practically every game ever written. Beginning with an Asteroids style sequence set in the lattice work of a crystal you go onto fight through a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up level, a 3D meteor storm and a Xenon II type vertical shoot 'em up. Great unclassifiable stuff.

*** ACE RATING 905**

STAR TREK V

Mindscape ● Atari ST £24.99dk ● Amiga

£24.99dk ● Macintosh

£34.99dk ● PC £34.99dk
The game of the movie in
which you must recover
the beleaguered Enterprise. The game is made
by its superb (EGA) graphics. There are several
excellent animations
throughout the game,
which is an unusual mixture of strategy and adventure elements. A game to
keep you absorbed for

★ ACE RATING 930

THEIR FINEST HOUR: THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Lucasfilm ● Atari ST £24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● PC £24.99dk World War II air combat relived in this superlative flight sim. You have the opportunity to fly a variety of WWII craft from the Spitfire to the Hurricane. A neat option is the camera which records your flight and can be replayed to assess your performance. ★ ACE RATING 933

TOWER OF BABEL

Microprose ● Atari ST £24.99 ● Amiga £24.99
An imaginative 3D puzzler from Pete Cooke – the man who brought you *Tau Ceti*. You control three robots, a zapper, grabber, and pusher. They must be used to complete a specific task on a number of futuristic levels of a tower. This involves working your way past various nasty obstructions deliberately designed to impede your

progress. This game will have you burning the midnight oil as you attempt for the nth time to get past a particularly tricky level.

★ ACE RATING 930

VENDETTA

System 3 ● C64 £9.99cs £12.99dk

A great arcade adventure that really pushes the C64 to it's limits. You must fight your way past the terrorists to defuse a bomb, and rescue the professor and his daughter. But while you are on the terrorists' tails the police are on yours. Most of the action takes place against an isometric 3D background, but there is also an excellent driving section to rival many full-scale driving games.

★ ACE RATING 912

VETTE

Mirrorsoft/Spectrum
Holobyte ● Atari ST TBA

● Amiga TBA ● PC £29.99

High speed racing round the streets of San Francisco in one of four Corvettes on offer. The superb 3D colour graphics in the game give a great sense of the wind in your hair as you roar down precariously steep streets desperately trying to avoid pedestrians and other vehicles. Realistic and lots of fun, this game, from the people who brought you Falcon, will have you hooked.

★ ACE RATING 926

X-OUT

Rainbow Arts Atari ST
£19.99dk Amiga
£19.99dk Amstrad
£9.99cs £14.99dk Spectrum £9.99cs
£14.99dk C64 £9.99cs
£14.99dk
Possibly the best horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up

rossibly the best horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up ever written. There's everything in this game any trigger happy chap could want: well animated sprites, pretty backgrounds, lots of speed, a bagfull of weaponry for the taking, loadsabonuses, and plenty of challenge what more could you want?

★ ACE RATING 939

COMPO RESULTS

Once again it's time to make some people's day and ruin a lot of others with our mega compo results column. Let's hope you fall into the former category.

First off, theres the competition we ran in our American Special (Issue 31) for those of you who actually read the magazine in detail. We know that if you enetered you must read the magazine thoroughly, because otherwise you would not have read the caption that announced we would be sending an autographed page of code from the Utility program on *Chaos Strikes Back* written by Joe Linhoff of FTL to the first person who wrote and asked for it. Quickest off the mark was **Jonathan Moore** of **Guiseley**, **Leeds** who will shortly be receiving this piece of computer memorabilia to stick on his wall.

Jonathan seems to be a good first name to own this month, because it is another Jonathan who has won the Golden Joystick draw for £100 of free software and an ACE T-Shirt. There, wasn't it worth voting **Jonathan Bisset** from **Glasgow**?

Winner of the April '90 Prize Crossword is **Steve Lee**, of **Ramsey**, **Huntingdon** who will shortly be receiving a cheque for £10.

Also due to receive a tenner for correctly solving the ACE Prize Puzzle for April is **S.Jewson** of **Narbeth**, **Dyfed**.

The solutions to both the April Prize Crossword, and The April Prize Puzzle can be found on page 113 along with the competitions for this month. Look out for the result of our fantastic FM Towns giveaway in the next interest packed issue of your favourite computer magazine...

That's all folks!

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PINK PUZZLERS

SOLUTION TO APRIL '90 PRIZE CROSSWORD



SOLUTION TO APRIL '90 PRIZE PUZZLE

The score was 1, 19, and 14. This makes a total of 34. Had the darts landed one place clockwise on the board they would have scored 18, 7, and 9, whereas one place anticlockwise would have given the score 20, 3, and 11. Both of these scores also adds up to 34.

Solution: In the listing the three loops A, B and C determine the relative positions of each of the three darts on the dartboard. The **actual** scores relating to each of these positions is found by reading the relevant value held in array D(). These are read into the array at the start of the program at lines 110 and 120, the actual scores of the dartboard being held in the DATA line – this data being in sequence as read across the board. To allow reference to adjacent sectors there is a slight overlap in this sequence – that is, the array is 22 units in size and the first two scores on the board (20 and 1) are repeated.

Each permutation of throws is taken as generated by the three loops A, B, and C and the score for that throw is totalled into S1. The scores for the two consecutive sectors are then calculated into S2 and S3. If these three scores are alike the **middle** set of the three is the required throw. This is then printed out at line 190.

- 100 DIM D(22) 110 FOR F=1 TO 22:READ Z 120 D(F)=Z:NEXT F 130 FOR A=1 TO 20
- 130 FOR A=1 TO 20 140 FOR B=A TO 20
- 150 FOR C=B TO 20
- 160 S1=D(A)+D(B)+D(C)170 S2=D(A+1)+D(B+1)+D(C+1)
- 170 S2=D(A+1)+D(B+1)+D(C+1)180 S3=D(A+2)+D(B+2)+D(C+2)
- 190 IF \$1=\$2 AND \$2=\$3 THEN PRINT D(A+1);" ";D(B+1);" ";D(C+1)
- 200 NERT C:NERT B:NERT A
- 210 END
- 1000 DATA 20, 1, 18, 4, 13, 6, 10, 15, 2, 17, 3, 19, 7, 16, 8, 11, 14, 9, 12, 5, 20, 1

JUNE '90 PRIZE PUZZLE

Set By Archie Medes

Arnold, Basil, Charles, Duncan and Eric are all founder members of the 'Eccentrics Club' and some of them can be found most days having lunch together at 'Chez Alphonse'.

Because of their various eccentricities not all of them will necessarily be present on any particular day. In fact, they only attend for lunch at the restaurant on dates which are specified by the following rules:

Arnold attends every day, but only during months which have an 'A' in their names.

Basil is only to be found there on the 'odd' days of the month.

Charles will never go for lunch unless the day of the week contains the letter 'N'.

Duncan only goes if the day of the month is exactly divisible by 5.

Eric, meanwhile, attends only every thirteenth day.

Curiously, last Easter Sunday (April 15th 1990), all five men happened to be present together – this date being one on which they could all attend – even including Eric as this happened to fall on one of his 'Thirteenth' days.

Can you say when next all five of them will be present for their lunch?

NAME::
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Entries to be sent to: ACE June '90 Crossword, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON. EC1R 3AU. To arrive no later than 7th June 1990.

ACE JUNE '90 PRIZE CROSSWORD

Set By Mips ACROSS CLUES

- 5. Den not in out forming a software house. (8)
- 7. Stone animal seen outside New York (4)
- 8. Covet Ted's hidden game. (5)
- 9. One taking steps to get game from US Gold. (7)
- 10. She's young to be on the throne, but it's only a game. (4,5)
- 11. Float Mal's new game company. (9)

- 14 &15. Enlarged CDs! (7,5)
- 17. In a daze Roger scores nil. (4)
- 18. Dread ski game from Micro Style. (4,4)

DOWN CLUES

- 1. Game that needs minutes or hours. (4)
- 2. One able to hold drink.
- 3. Movement when US Gold game loses its head. (6)
- 4. Geordie house! (8)

- 6. Entitled to keep the name. (5)
- 10. Flip when the act has finished. (4,4)
- 11. Pal upset by top portable (6)
- 12. A cadre formed games establishment (6)
- 13. Tim, so excited, skips. (5)
- 16. Instructions to reform co-ed. (4)

WINNERS OF THE APRIL '90 PRIZE PUZZLE AND PRIZE CROSSWORD ARE LISTED ON PAGE 111

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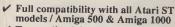
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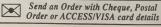
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ACE DEALS

CHECK OUT THE SPECIAL BARGAINS AVAILABLE AT LOCAL DEALERS THIS MONTH

ere we go, here we go World Cup fever has gripped the software retailers en masse this month, as windows. shop mobiles, posters and stickers all go to promote one or more of never-ending the stream of soccer games being released or rereleased to coincide with the finals in Italy in June.

The Virgin Games Centre, with its sister company Virgin Games publishing the game Italia '90, is taking the lead in this, with May being declared a 'football month' in all Virgin Games Centre stores.

Aside from being bombarded with World Cup material as you go into the shops, there will also be a "very big" competition involving the Virgin title - details still being hammered out as we went to press.

City Software in Liverpool is also jumping on the World Cup bandwagon, with several promotions lined up around a selection of soccer simulations.

The North-Eastern based chain, Computershops, is also kitting up for the World Cup with a free draw throughout its stores associated with US Gold's Italy 1990 game - loads of official World Cup footballs are there to be won. It's not all footie, though. Virgin Games Centres will find a bit of space for a competition associated Rainbird/Microprose's *miawinter* on most formats, so if you haven't yet bought your copy, this should be well worth checking out.

City Software is also stocking the Nintendo Entertainment System for the first time from next month and is offering some discounts on both Nintendo hardware and software to tempt you into splashing out.

Throughout May, both the console and cartridges will be available at "a general introductory price". And if you're in City Software looking at Nintendos, it's always worth entering one of their raffles for every £3 spent in the store you 'll get a raffle ticket; every week a ticket is drawn

to win a waikman or similar sort of prize.

Finally, Computershops will be giving you the chance to win model robots - as seen in Domark's science fiction-inspired Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters - in a special competition. And you don't even need to buy the game to enter.

City Software is on Lime Street, Liverpool.

There Microbyte stores in the Arndale Centre, Manchester; the Broadmarsh Centre. Nottingham; Wakefield; Kirkgate, the Metro Centre, Gateshead; the Greenmarket, Newcastle Upon Tyne; the Kirkgate Centre, Bradford; the Bull Ring Centre, Birmingham; the County Arcade, Leeds; and Pasture Road, Goole.

You can find Computer Shop outlets in the Arndale Centre, Manchester; Newcastle, Leeds, Preston, Sunderland, Stockton and Nottingham. Also part of the Computer Shop chain are the two Games Store outlets in Carlisle and Middlesbrough, which stock role-playing games as well as computer software.

Virgin has its
Games Centre outlets
on London's Oxford
Street (at Marble Arch,
within the Megastore,
and at no 100) and
Bristol, and also in
Megastores in Birmingham, Brighton, Dublin,
Edinburgh, Glasgow (at
Union St and Argyle St),
Leeds, and Notting-

nam.

All offers and promotions are subject to availability of stock. Although we do our best to ensure our dealer promotion information is accurate at the time of going to press, ACE cannot take any responsibility for changes or cancellations to dealers' plans.

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ACE DIAR

THIS MONTH'S RELEASES AND EVENTS FOR ENTRY IN YOUR LEATHER-BOUND, GOLD-CLASPED FILOFAX

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Week's releases at a glance Ocean: Sly Spy, Secret Agent (all formats) Bond-esque action from the arcades.

Microprose: Railroad Tycoon Strategic simulation from the heyday of steam. Pirates (Amiga) 16-bit version of swashbuckling action title from some years back.

US Gold: Italy 90 (all formats) One of an army of football sims of all shapes, sizes, prices and quality all trying to cash in on the World Cup. This one is a playing sim with a host of accompanying packaging and competitions. US Gold is doubtless hoping to banish all memories of the red card which World Cup Carnival received in 1986.

Bethesda Softworks: Hockey League Simulator (Amiga) That's hockey as in ice hockey ...

Accolade: European Challenge (PC, Amiga, C64 disk) Accessory disk for The Duel: Test Drive II, featuring 'typical' scenes from European countryside (German Autobahn, Riviera switchbacks, and English country lanes included).

Gremlin: Federation Quest

BSS Jane Seymour (ST, Amiga) Race against time to repair stricken ship.

Mastertronic/16-Blitz: Yes PM (CPC, C64, Spectrum/PC) Sunday.....6 London phone numbers all change: new code for inner London is 071-; for outer London. 081-

Monday7 Bank Holiday - the one which was commonly known as the May Day Bank Holiday

Saturday12 FA Cup Final, 3.00pm, Wembley Stadium: Crystal Palace vs Manchester United

Week's releases at a glance Ocean: Adidas World Cup Football (ST, Amiga, CPC, C64, Spectrum) Another in the series of several thousand soccer games based on the World Cup - this one has shunted Ocean's other football title. Liverpool, off the release schedule into next season.

Accolade: Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Golf and Course Design (PC) New golf sim in the

Nicklaus series, this is a standalone product, as opposed to an accessory disk for the original. Balance of the Planet (PC) Chris "Balance of Power" Crawford applies the same strategic gameplay from his previous titles to green issues.

Gremlin: Venus - The Flytrap (ST, Amiga)

Mastertronic/16-Blitz: T-Bird (CPC, C64, Spectrum/ST, Amiga)

Sunday.....13 Mother's Day in the US Saturday19

Armed Forces Day

Week's releases at a glance Domark: Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters (PC) Converted from the Tengen coin-op, arcade game with an SF comic book scenario.

Microprose: Midwinter (PC) Midwinter on the PC is becoming something of a regular in the ACE Diary - Microprose assures that it really will be released at this time, "fingers crossed..." International Soccer Challenge Another World Cup contender.

Firebird: Fire and Brimstone (ST, Amiga)

Mastertronic: Super Stock Car (CPC, C64, Spectrum) Monday.....21 Victoria Day (Canada) Tuesday22 Chelsea Flower Show opens Thursday......24 Ascension Day

Week's releases at a glance Hewson: Deliverance - Stormlord II (C64, CPC, Spectrum). Latest program from Cybernoid and Stormlord programmer Raffaelle Cecco

Loriciel/US Gold: Tennis Cup (all formats) Impressive graphics in this singles-or-doubles tennis simulation.

Domark/Broderbund: Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? (PC) Strategic adventure style game designed to test your deductive powers as you work out Carmen's whereabouts from the clues in

Mastertronic: 3D Pinball (CPC) Simulation incorporating various essential pinball effects, such as bonus plays, rollover lanes, etc

Sunday.....27 Sunday after Ascension

Monday 28 Spring Bank Holiday Memorial Day (USA)

Wednesday.....30 Shavuot

JUNE

Friday1 Atari 90 show opens at the Novotel, Hammersmith

Saturday2 Atari 90, Novotel, Hammersmith

Week's releases at a glance US Gold: Rotox (ST, Amiga, PC) Space strategy game combining puzzles requiring dexterity and arcade sequences.

Accolade: Gunboat (ST, Amiga, C64 disk) Take on various missions around the world in your river patrol boat. The thawing of the Cold War means a serious lack of easy targets when it comes to goodies vs baddies, so it's back to Vietnam for your first mission, while in your second, the 'crack-infested waters of Colombia' are fast taking on the Russkies' mantle of major league threat to apple pie and the American Way.

Magnetic Scrolls: Wonder-

TITLEAMIGA

land (Amiga, ST, PC, Mac, Archimedes) Based on Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass, Magnetic Scrolls returns with an adventure which will rely less on text input and more on a graphic 'WIMP' user interface.

16-Blitz: Conflict (ST, Amiga) Political simulation centred around the power struggles in the Middle East.

Empire: Pipemania (Macintosh, MSX) The game they call 'the new Tetris' reaches the formats many titles never even consider.

Readysoft: Space Ace (IBM) PC) Don Bluth's animated cartoon, widely criticised for lack of gameplay, universally admired for its graphics.

Sunday.....3 Atari 90, Novotel, Hammersmith Pentecost

Monday4 June Holiday (Republic of Ireland)

Wednesday6 The Derby Saturday9 Queen's official birthday The

Oaks horse race

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AMIGA CONTACTS wanted by newcomer. Is there anyone out there willing to help? Please send letters/ lists to Andy, 36 Bramble Drive, Honeywood, Gons, Carlton, Nottm. NG3 6NE.
AMIGA CONTACTS wanted latest story only 100% reply. Davia, 14 Churchill Drive, Bridge of Allan, Stirling, Scotland. FK9 4TD.

AMIGA CONTACTS wanted send disks and lists to Simon, Glory Bee

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IBM PC3 compatible contacts wanted from all over the world to swap solutions, hint books and more! (100% reply) any on is welcome. Write to Mohammad Jamih, PO Box 211733, Amman, Jordan.

PC CONTACTS wanted from France. 100% reply. Send lists to: Marc Meleard, 12-14 Cite Popincourt, 75011, Paris, France.

WORD PROCESSING, CV's, Pricelists + Database etc. Reasonable prices send for details send SAE to Martin Joyce, 98 St John Rd, Wembley, Middx. HA9 7JN or ring 01-903-5428.

ST USERS looking for contacts write to Jamie, 'Dar Melika" Vista Estate, Santa Venera, Malta. All letters answered.

ST Penpal, Kent only. Write to 'Hideout', Whitepost Lane, Culverston, Meopham, Kent. DA13 0TW or Tel:0732-822702. Now, 100% reply.

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HELPLINE

ATARI ST OWNER. Where can I get discs mercenery and Dark side. Need tips to complete mission five on Elite.

HELP! Last Ninja 2 is eating away at my brain! I simply can't get past level 6 on the BBC micro version as I keep getting pulped by the man on the stairs. Also can anyone help with Exile, Spycat, Quest or Barbarian 2? I can also help with lots of BBC games. Contact: Andy, 9 The Avenue, Longlevens, Gloscester. G12 0BP.

AMIGA Artists wanted to design pictures for a large computer group. Please send sample pictures (good or bad) on disks to Tim Clyde, 9 Heriot Row, Edinburgh EH3 6HU. Programmers and contacts are also welcome. Please include phone numbers. We promise we wil answer all letters received.

HOW do you complete Spell caster for the Sega master system. Contact Alan Fraser, 140 Orpington Av, Walker, Newcastle. NE6 2RG.

If you would like help with Dungeon master or Chaos Strikes Back, then write to: Shane Cook, 1 Polborder, St.Mellion, Saltash, Cornwall. PL12 6RE.

Help and hints given in the following games for the Commodore 64: Battle Tech (Amiga), Parallax, The Great Escape, Austerlitz (Amiga), Dan Dare, Elite (Amiga), Laser Squad (Amiga), Trap Door, Aliens (US/English), Battle Hawks 1942 (Amiga), Quadalcanal, Kampfgruppe (Amiga), Ziods, Lords of Conquest, Shogun (Virgin) Dark Empire, Red Lighting(Amiga) Iwo Jima, Knights of the Desert. Voyager (Amiga), Football Manager, Jack the Nipper, Who Dares Wins 2, Ikari Warriors (Amiga), Arena, Waterloo (Amiga) Football Manager, Sentinel (C64/Amiga), Joan of Arc (Amiga) Power at sea, Tracksuit Manager (Amiga), Spooks, Freedom(Amiga), Star Fox. Contact Stuart Hardy, 33 Fir Tree Drive, Wales, Sheffield, S31 8LZ

ALL BLOODWYCH GURUS! Where is the serpent key in the Dragon Tower? Tel:Rik 0482 77439 this millisecond! Could anyone give me help or cheats etc for the Amiga games, Hate, Uridium, 1943, Rambo 111 and POW Shoot em' up any tips for Lancelot and Stiegar, Eagles Nest, Maniac Mansion, Black Shadow, Shoot em' up. Will refund postage. Contact DC Moore, 9 Edinbure Way, Dersing Ham, Kings Lynn. PE31 6JJ.

HEY YOU! are the games you play getting you down. Well fear not C.H.E.A.T is here. The computer Help and Tips club can help we have nearly 1500 tips already! (Amiga and C64 only at the moment - sorry) For details write to: D.Archer, 13 Devonshire Rd, Hornchurch Essex. RM12 4LG

Please help! I'm stuck on these games Kings Quest 4 and Police Quest 2. I'm hal;f way through Police Quest 2 and have been stuck on it for 6 months, any help would be appreciated. I can also help with Space Quest 3, Kings Quest 1, Defender of the Crown, Joan of Arc, Leisure Siut Larry 2, Legend, and Barbarian 2, If needing help send SAE to: Greg Johnson, "Norolle" Roma, PO Box 138, Queensland, Australia.

Please, please could you help! Need cheats or tips etc for Rocket Ranger, Police Quest 2, Batman the Movie, and Untouchables on the ST. Please send SAE to: Stuart Murrell, 44 Deacon Av, Kempston, Bedford. MK42 7DT. Tel:0234-852234.

HELP ME! I need blank discs to form user group. I will swap * blank discs for any of games listed. Add 6 extra discs per game. Chase HQ, Ninja Warriors, Future Wars, Beverley Hills Cop, Ghostbusters 2 Hard Drivin', Operation Thunderbolt, Stormlord, Indy Adventure, Driv'in Force, Untouchables, Interphase, Strider, Xenon 2, Switchblade, Shadow of the Beast, Stunt Car Racer, Bloodwych. Our group need'sa modem! We also need to learn coding. Contact Gerard Brady, Syntax, Clongowes Wood, Naas, Kildare, Eire.

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My predictions for the TOP TITLE in next month's charts are as follows:	THE TOP GAME FOR THE AMIGA WILL BE:		My five predicted top entries for my Jackpot Category are:
THE TOP GAME FOR THE SPEC-		You can also submit a JACKPOT ENTRY: choose any ONE of the	2
TRUM WILL BE:	THE TOP GAME FOR THE AMSTRAD CPC'S WILL BE:	following categories and enter your prediction for the TOP FIVE	3
		ENTRIES in next month's charts for that category.	5
THE TOP GAME FOR THE C64 WILL BE:	THE TOP GAME FOR THE PC WILL	My JACKPOT CATEGORY is (tick	Rules:
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	BE:	one only): ST GAMES	All entries must be received by the closing date for this round of May 24th1990.
THE TOP GAME FOR THE ATARI	THE TOP COMPANY IN THE	AMIGA GAMES PC GAMES C64 GAMES	No employees of EMAP, or of any company involved in the production, distribution, or sale of ACE Magazine are eligible for entry.
OT WILL BE.	STOCKMARKET (COMPANY COUNTER) WILL BE:	SPECTRUM GAMES	Only one entry per household.
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The BLITTER END

CD UK - AT LAST? SPECIAL



NEC - already over 200,000 CD ROM units in use, and now coming to the UK in September?

ne good thing about the Computer Entertainment Show this September is that an all-games show is giving the console manufacturers a platform from which to reveal their plans for our green and pleasant land.

NEC, whose PC Engine has been the subject of more grey imports than most machines, is now firmly tipped to launch the official UK version this year at CES. Similarly, Virgin Mastertronic are to launch the excellent Sega Megadrive.

There's no doubt that if 16 bit consoles get the same support in this country from manufacturers, software houses, and distributors then they are going to give the 16-bit computers a run for their money. To date this hasn't happened. It's been a frustrating feature of the console scene that the official UK import delays (which always seem to accompany Japanese products) have meant that no sooner do we receive one product than we hear tempting news of a new, more powerful beast. Is anyone to blame if they don't buy a PC Engine because they want a Super Turbographx? Or hesitating over a Sega Master System because they have a secret desire for a Megadrive?

But the best thing about the PC Engine launch is that it will (along with Commodore's much discussed but little seen CD-Amiga) give the UK the potential to develop a CD-ROM games market. And that can't happen too soon...

People will do anything for a mention in this column. Lesley Walker of Virgin wrote to us to say that four finalists in the Sega games championships flew to New York for four days and refused to eat anywhere except at Macdonalds. 'What's the chance of using this as a news story?' asks Lesley. Well, apart from the apparent connection between video games addiction and health, not much. But rather more chance, methinks, than the people who sent us the press release headlined 3.5 INCHES NOW STANDARD AT DYNAMICS MARKETING. Surely not a fact to advertise, eh chaps? Our favourite, however, was the one from Parkfield which promised a video to let us 'Discover the world's secret animals...'. So that's what they were doing with that camcorder at the Golden Joysticks...

Blit Blit!

You probably won't have noticed a small change on our contents page this month - ACE is now published by a new company, EMAP Images, formed especially to produce innovative titles for tomorrow's consumer technology. Below, publisher (now Managing Director) Terry Pratt (and his wife) celebrate the birth of this great idea and look forward to the arrival of lots of little maga-



ACE CAPTION COMPETITION NO 1



This dreamy, romantic scene inspired us to launch the first of a number of ACE Caption Competitions. If you can come up with a witty line or two to fill an imaginary bubble above the lady's head, let us know on a postcard and we'll send a mystery software prize (worth at least £20) to the sender of the one that makes us laugh loudest. Send your entry to ACE Captions, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

While we're in a prize-giving mood, here's another opportunity for you. Sharp eyed readers will have noticed that there is a blanked out photograph on page 10 of this issue. The simple truth is that when the software business get together, some of the things they get up to are impossible to imagine - let alone print. So what's going on behind that anonymous black square? Again, software to the value of £20 to the man (or woman) who sends the most original suggestion. And a solicitor's letter to anyone who gets it right.



ISSUE

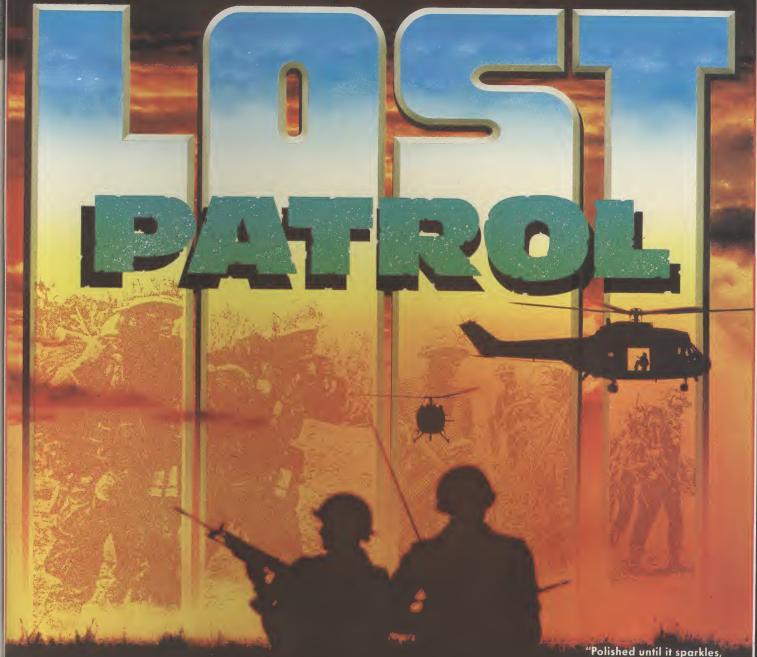
There's a graphics extravaganza next month as we bring you exclusive details from some of the world's top software developers on the construction of 3D worlds. Mike Singleton, Jez San, David Braben, and others take you step by step into cyberspace. There's also a special location report from Spain as we visit Dinamic in Madrid - the boys behind such hits as Army Moves and Game Over - and we continue to blaze a path through the European software jungle with a visit to Infogrames in Lyons. But for someone it's going to be the hottest issue ever - because we'll be announcing the winner of our fabulous FM Towns compo. Keep your fingers crossed!

Ooops!

Only a sprinkling of minor Ooops' last month, you'll be sorry to hear. In our review of Champions of Krynn the old score grid from the previous month appeared on the page along with the correct one. Those who took guidance from the panel rating the game at 820 were on the right track. And in our review of Renaissance, technobuffs would have immediately spotted that the versions labelled 'Contemporary' were actu-ally 'Classical' – and vice versa. Finally, many apologies to Chris Morley, who compiled our Updates Pages but did not appear on the contributors' list. Sorry

Chris!

WE'RE FIT, WE'RE ALIVE, BUT...



"Polished until it sparkles, The Lost Patrol features animated screens the like of which we've never seen before" The Games Machine

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